



## 2004 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES CITY OF WILLIAMSBURG

### Statewide Fiscal Priorities

#### 1\* State Support for Standards of Quality

The city urges the General Assembly to adequately support primary and secondary education in local school divisions. State support for the Williamsburg/James City County school division has dropped from **22%** of total school revenues in FY99 to **19%** in the current fiscal year.

#### 2\* Transportation Funding

The city maintains that seriously inadequate transportation funding threatens the economic future of Hampton Roads and other regions in Virginia. The city endorses additional funding, specifically increased statewide or regional gasoline taxes, to help meet critical transportation needs in the Commonwealth.

#### 3\* State/Local Joint Functions

The city maintains that state budget actions in recent years have significantly reduced the proportion of state contribution to state/local jointly funded functions, including lagging pay for state funded employees. The balance between state and local funding needs to be restored in the following functional areas:

- Judicial – e.g.: Courts, Commonwealth's Attorney, Clerk of Court, Parole and Probation
- Corrections – e.g.: Regional Jail, Juvenile Jail, Community Corrections
- Health – e.g.: Health Department, Community Services Board
- Public Libraries

#### 4\* State Tax Restructuring

The city supports in concept a restructuring of Virginia's revenue system to reflect today's service economy and urges the General Assembly to make this issue a priority during the 2004 session. The city's support of any given proposal, of course, will depend in the specific content of the proposal.

## Regional Priorities

### 1\* Cooperative Marketing Program

The city urges the General Assembly to increase funding for the Virginia Tourism Corporation to promote tourism in Virginia, and to reinstate funding for the Virginia Cooperative Marketing Program, at least at levels comparable to that of prior years.

### 2\* Higher Education

The city supports the College of William and Mary in maintaining, and not increasing, existing enrollment numbers, and in increasing the proportion of state funding to the College. The city also supports construction and operation of the Thomas Nelson Community College Williamsburg area campus on the Warhill site.

### 3\* Passenger Rail Service

The city supports the General Assembly in providing state funding (\$175 million needed from federal and state sources) for improved passenger rail infrastructure on the Washington D.C. to Newport News corridor. The investment could result in five round trips daily at considerably faster speeds providing a viable transportation alternative to I-64 and air service.

### 4\* Jamestown 2007 Celebration

The city supports the Jamestown 2007 Celebration planning efforts and encourages the General Assembly to continue funding important Celebration functions including: transportation, marketing, programming, and infrastructure needs.

### 5\* Base Realignment Commission

The city supports state assistance in the amount of \$250,000 to the BRAC II Hampton Roads efforts, which would equal the amount given by the state for BRAC I. This funding was very helpful in defending the Hampton Roads military presence during BRAC I and is needed again.

## Local Priorities

### **1\*** Rental Housing Inspection

The city operates a Rental Housing Inspection program under current state law, and opposes any changes in state law that would compromise the ability of localities to conduct rental housing inspections in housing conservation areas.

### **2\*** City Charter Change—Assessment Districts for Underground Wiring

The city requests that the City Charter (or alternatively Section 58.1-100 of the State Code) be amended to allow special assessment districts for placing overhead utilities underground based on request of 75% of property owners in a proposed assessment district.

### **3\*** City Charter Change—Compensation for City School Board Members

The city requests an amendment to Section 9 of the City Charter to allow the City's two appointed School Board Members to receive the same compensation as elected members when acting as a joint school board.

### **4\*** City Charter Change—Administration of Oaths

The city requests a charter amendment to allow the city's Clerk of Council to administer oaths of office to members of city boards and commissions at the Municipal Building instead of by the Clerk of Circuit Court at the Courthouse. The administration of oaths by the Clerk of Council would be more efficient and convenient for citizens.